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**BACKGROUND**

The [Braddock District Council of Community Associations](#) (BDC) provides a forum for representatives of residential community associations within the Braddock district of Fairfax County (FFC), Virginia (VA), to express their views on major issues of common concern. The BDC is a section 501(c) (4) non-profit corporation, with geographic boundaries coterminous with the Braddock magisterial district. Meetings of the BDC are open to representatives of all homeowner, tenant, and civic associations in the Braddock District. Meetings are held from 7:30 – 9:00 P.M. on the second Tuesday of each month, except July and August, in the meeting hall at the [Braddock District Supervisor's Office](#), at the north end of the Kings Park Library (in Burke, VA).

The mailing address is: Braddock District Council, c/o Braddock District Supervisor's Office, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015-1608. The office telephone number is: 703.425.9300.

Chairman: Bob Cosgriff (Hickory Farms ) 703.764.0720 [bandjcoz@cavtel.net](mailto:bandjcoz@cavtel.net)  
Vice-Chairman: Janice Hedetnyemi (Oak Hill) 703.978.8095 [JanyceNH@cox.net](mailto:JanyceNH@cox.net)  
Treasurer: Ivan Dietrich (Little Run) 703.323.1881 [IvanDietrich@aol.com](mailto:IvanDietrich@aol.com)  
Recording Secretary: Jeffrey Nolan (Bonnie Brae) 703.867.4761 [infosec@technologist.com](mailto:infosec@technologist.com)  
Corresponding Secretary: Brenda Cammauf (Heritage Court) 703.750.3730 email not provided

**ATTENDEES:**

The list is provided separately.

**AGENDA (all times P.M.)**

- 7:30 Welcome and remarks by Chairman Bob Cosgriff
- 7:35 Comments by Supervisor Bulova
- 7:45 Presentation: "FY-2005 Advertised Budget Plan" by:
  - Ms. Susan W. Datta, Director, FFC Department of Management & Budget
  - Ms. Barbara G. Emerson, Senior Budget Analyst, FFC Department of Management & Budget
- 8:15 Business Meeting:
  - Treasurer's Report,
  - Approval of Minutes,
  - New Business
- 9:00 Adjourn

**SUMMARY**

**The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Cosgriff at 7:30 P.M.**

Sharon Bulova (SB): I'm the BoS Budget Chair and I'm soliciting public comments on the Advertised Budget before we make it our own. Sometimes the BoS has changed the County Executive's Advertised Budget, and other times we have not changed it much at all. We have tried to respond to things like 9/11 and West Nile virus. It is a story of the community.

SB: I want to talk briefly about my meeting today with our Health Department officials regarding West Nile virus. Some of the things we have done and will be doing is treating pipes and storm sewers. Last year it rained so much that it constantly flushed the larvae out of the system. One product that works is a natural product, called "Mosquito Dunks," and my office has a supply. DEET works for hours and hours for personal protection. This is the most effective thing you can buy. I also have a supply in my office.

SB: Also I have handouts here on my Anti-Gang Task Force. There is a syllabus for the topics of the meetings, starting on February 11, 2004 and ending on June 9, 2004. We have a partnership with the

Annandale High School principal. Together we are looking at what programs are available to deal with the gang issue, and what else is needed. We are going to focus at the end on revitalization of the community. Colin Campbell was the last president of the Ravensworth Civic Association before it went defunct. Colin has subsequently moved to Canterbury Woods. As active community members, you here tonight play a vital role.

Robert: Are there notes kept of the Task Force meetings?

SB: Yes. They are posted by my staff on our web site.

SB: Task force members who attend at least 4 of 5 meetings will be able to vote. This ensures that everyone who votes has had the benefit of the subject matter experts who speak each week. Regardless, everyone is invited to attend as possible.

Question: How many people attended?

SB: Due to extensive press coverage, at the first meeting we had about 200 people. I don't think we will continue at that level of participation. Channel 16 will present news from the task force. I will also brief the outcome of the task force at my June Town Hall meeting. Our BoS chairman, Gerry Connolly, is also interested in a county-wide anti-gang task force.

Question: Is the same kind of efforts going on in other districts?

SB: So far we are the first. Other supervisors are having town meetings.

Question: Has anyone been successful in breaking the gang activity?

SB: When I first took office in the 1980's I was briefed on gang activity. Gangs have come and gone, but have not taken over. In other parts of the country that has not occurred. In California, for example, gangs have gotten out of control and then they are hard to break. Gangs are a belonging thing. Young people join gangs when they feel that are not accepted, and perhaps their parents are busy making a living and are not at home. Tiny Rascals and other gangs are now active, but are being actively monitored by our anti-gang squad in our police department.

Question: How would we know what to look for to recognize gang activity?

SB: There is information available on the public safety web site.

Jeff Nolan [JN]: This month's newsletter from the West Springfield Police District had an article on how to recognize gang activity, including gang graffiti.

**Susan Datta then delivered her briefing on our county's FY-2005 Advertised Budget Plan.**

Susan Datta [SD]: I have brought several handouts this evening. My slide presentation is here in hard copy. I also have brought copies of the Fairfax County Strategic Planning Initiative and a list of options for budget cuts that was put together by our county executive.

SD: Education and public safety have been priorities in recent budgets. Service availability has been impacted, and some programs have been cut. Investments such as storm drains and street lights have been deferred. There is nothing new in this budget except for staffing of the emergency operations center.

SD: Our statement of our core purpose and our vision elements is to protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County by: connecting people and

places, practicing environmental stewardship, building livable spaces, corporate stewardship, maintaining healthy economies, creating a culture of engagement, and maintaining safe and caring communities.

Question: Was there no gain last year in sales?

SD: Last year sales tax revenue decreased. This year we expect revenue to increase.

SD: 90% of our revenue are capped or constrained by the state. We don't have the same ability to diversify our tax base like cities do, with one exception. The governor just signed legislation giving us the ability to levy a transient occupancy tax.

SD: Many of the jobs being produced are off the books type jobs, e.g., consultants.

SD: If the federal government starts pulling homeland security funding that will have a big impact on businesses in our county. State aid to the county has already been cut by \$50M since FY-2002.

SD: Of every dollar that FFC citizens send to Richmond, we get \$0.19 back.

SB: In most other jurisdictions, the majority of the education funding comes from the state. It is the opposite in our county. Our county finances about 70% of our school budget.

Question: Are all counties subject to the same tax levying restrictions?

SD: Yes. Virginia is a Dillon Rule state. We have no powers unless the state gives them to us.

SD: We have a 2-4 year supply of vacant office space. Not all economic growth translates into revenue growth, however. We depend heavily on real estate taxes.

SD: Personal property tax is going down because the used car market is depressed with lower priced new cars. Thus the value of used cars, and the tax revenue on them, are decreasing. Phone tax revenues are also decreasing as people drop phone service at home and rely strictly on cell phones.

Question: You say that the real estate tax has dropped, so why do I have a bigger bill this year?

SD: While the tax rate has decreased, the assessed values have increased and the net result is that you are paying more in real estate taxes.

Question: What is the Mean Assessed Value for residences?

SD: For single family homes, it is \$426,644. For duplexes, it is \$256, 608. For townhouses, it is \$169,109. For all homes, it is \$321,238, which results in a real estate and personal property tax per household of \$3,967. Our target for revenue diversification is to have at least 25% of our tax base from other sources. However, we are now at a historic low – since records were first kept in the early 80's – of 18%.

Barbara Emerson [BE]: We follow guidelines from the BoS, and unlike our federal government, we can't run a deficit. The whole budget is \$4.6B. This includes all revenue streams. General fund disbursements include things such as Metro and schools; schools are 53% of such disbursements. General fund direct expenditures includes things such as police and fire protection. The county also funds the FCPS debt service – \$127M per year; this supports annual bond sales of about \$130M.

BE: Since FY-1991, our county population has increased by more than 26% and 150 new facilities have been opened for community centers, police stations, fire stations, and SACC, but county employee growth has been limited to 1%. This has occurred because administrative positions have been converted to positions that support these facilities.

BE: In 2003, our General Assembly authorized use of Fund 116 – Integrated Pest Management Program, a.k.a., the Gypsy Moth fund, to combat other insect pests.

BE: The SACC employee positions are not paid out of FCPS funds. Parents pay the cost for their children with the exception of low-income families, who receive a subsidy.

Question: Where is the Laurel Hill Golf Course that will be opened in May 2005?

SB: The course will be a money maker and is on the grounds of the former D.C. prison on Route 123. Our BDC Chairman, Bob Cosgriff, has been active in the Laurel Hill task force.

Question: The Consolidated Community Funding Pool shows a 5% inflationary increase but that is not the current rate of inflation; why is this 5%?

SD: You are correct. This is both an inflation adjustment and program growth.

SB: The inflationary adjustment is not automatic each year.

BE: Our county is also investing in low-sulfur diesel fueled vehicles.

BE: We are planning for a 25% increase in our county health insurance plan, effective CY-2005, based on increased utilization and prescription drug costs.

Question: Does the FY-2005 Reserve of \$5.53M remain after state budget cuts are firm?

SB: When we adopted our budget last year, and we looked at “carry over,” we spent some of that on one-time things and we “saved” part of that balance to reduce the real estate tax rate the following year. We need \$14.5M to reduce the real estate tax rate by \$0.01 per \$100.

SB: Residents can petition to have a Sanitary District established to get county pickup of trash and leaves, but it is only once a week for trash pickup.

SD: The main reason for residents choose to become a Sanitary District is to reduce the number and frequency of trash trucks passing through their neighborhood.

Statement: At Canterbury Woods we have negotiated a rate with AAA for trash collection, and our residents can choose once or twice a week pickup.

Woman: The performance measure are much more tangible than what the federal government has been able to accomplish, and I commend you.

Man: Are there comparable counties?

BE: We compare ourselves to Arlington, Prince William, and Montgomery Counties, as well as other AAA bond jurisdictions, e.g., Westchester, NY. We also look at counties with a reputation, e.g., members of the International City Management Association. They have a benchmark program.

SD: About 130 governments participate. The annual questionnaire covers over 75% of our budget. Data validation is done. We compare ourselves to 500,000 resident or above jurisdictions, e.g., Virginia Beach; Richmond; Austin and San Antonio, Texas; Los Angeles, California; Phoenix, Arizona.

Man: In the Hampton Roads area, where I previously lived, they looked at the gross dollars being spent on transportation, but are we just looking at the same funding formula?

SB: We do have a presence in Richmond; Sue Mitterator is the head of the county lobbying team. Vivian Watts, one of our NoVA delegates, was one of the few to get a transportation funding formula change.

SB: For the first time ever we went down and had a reception with about 18 legislators. I think it was very effective. It was Gerry Connolly's idea.

Man: I've heard a lot people decide to move when they retire. The demographics change will drive our budget.

BE: Our seniors are the fastest growing demographic segment.

SB: It is not just services, but housing design we need for our seniors. We don't have much of that. We need to be working with the private sector to ensure we have appropriate housing for our seniors.

**Bob Cosgriff then thanked our speakers.**

Bob Cosgriff gave the Treasurer's Report for Ivan, who was absent. Our balance is \$1409.74, and many communities have not paid their dues.

Question: Can the Citizen of the Year nomination forms be posted on the Braddock web site?

☒ **Veronica McCrohan will make the Citizen of the Year nomination form available via the BDC web site.**

The previous meeting minutes were approved with two corrections:

1. The county person in the previous minutes was Cal Wagner, vice Clay Wagner.
2. The dates and times for the draft minutes, published in the last BDC newsletter, were incorrect; when printed, the minutes for the last two meetings had been run together.

☒ **Veronica McCrohan will make these corrections in the record copy of the minutes.**

Bob Cosgriff [BC]: Regarding Silverbrook Road, the original plan of the Laurel Hill Task Force was to get recommendations to the BoS by April. We now expect to have an interim report to the BoS in April. The Task Force has been in session for 16 months. We have a little more study to complete, and we will be speaking with the State Council of Higher Education in Richmond. Laurel Hill is composed of 3000 acres, most of which belongs to the Parks Authority. The Task Force is addressing 130 acres for residential mixed use and high-end retail. We want to avoid competing with the Laurel Hill Arts Foundation, and they are involved as well. We intend to include Graduated Care for seniors, from independent living to assisted living. Construction is proceeding on the new Griffith Water Treatment Plant and the new high school. Construction of a middle school is planned for 2014, and an elementary school in the long-range plan. It is cheaper to knock down old buildings and build new ones vice renovate the old buildings. Please drive down and see what is going on and spread the word.

BC: BoB Awards are due at the end of May. Citizen of Year Award nominations are due at the end of this month.

**The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Bob Cosgriff at 9:38 P.M.**

**ACRONYMS / ABBREVIATIONS**

BC	Bob Cosgriff
BDC	Braddock District Council
BoB	Best of Braddock (citizen award)
BoS	(Fairfax County) Board of Supervisors
D. C.	District of Columbia
DEET	N,N-Diethyl-meta-Tolamide (insect repellent)
FCPS	Fairfax County Public Schools
FFC	Fairfax County
FY	Fiscal Year
JN	Jeff Nolan
NoVA	Northern Virginia
SACC	School-Age Child Care
SB	(Braddock District Supervisor) Sharon Bulova
SD	Susan Data
VA	Virginia
9/11	September 11, 2001
\$B	Billions of dollars (U. S.)
\$M	Millions of dollars (U. S.)